CATALOGUING RARE BOOKS

at the

JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY

An Outline of Steps

by

A.F. Gunther Buchheim

Providence, Rhode Island

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John Carter Brown
Library
Brown University

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The John Carter Brown Library is an institution for
advanced research in the humanities at Brown University

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Rare book cataloguing at the John Carter Brown Library (JCB) is governed by four standards, in addition to those established in the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*, Second edition (Chicago, 1978) known as AACR2:

1) *Bibliographic Description of Rare Books*, issued by the Library of Congress (LC) (Washington, 1981) and based on International Standard Bibliographic Description for Older Books (Antiquarian) (ISBD(A)).

2) *LC Subject Headings*. Tenth edition (LCSH). 2v. (Washington, 1986).

3) Membership in the Research Libraries Group (RLG) and in its automated RLIN database, with general rules on machine readable cataloguing (MARC) established by LC and special regulations formulated by RLG.

4) Long-standing practices and conventions observed at the JCB itself, going back in some cases one hundred years, directed at improving the quality of cataloguing and enhancing retrieval of information about particular books. The information thus collected is of utmost importance to many of the scholars who use the JCB.

The steps involved in rare book cataloguing: (Note: The work described here is that done by professional catalogue librarians; work done by library assistants is indicated in square brackets [ ].)

I. AUTHOR

Requires establishment of name authority (i.e., correct author's name).

1. Purpose: To insure that all works written or issued by a particular person or corporate body (including contributions made to works of other persons) are reported under the same heading.

2. Procedures: Author's name to be checked in JCB Name Authority file. If present there, name will be used in the form as given; if not present, name has to be established, with the following sequence of sources to be consulted:

   a) Name Authority file in RLIN.

   b) Standard national biographical dictionaries, depending on the author's place of birth and/or language of the book to be catalogued.

   c) General biographical works, including those dealing with scholars and literary authors.

   d) Encyclopædias.

   e) Special biographical works, dealing with regional authors or those of certain time periods or certain subject areas.

   f) *The National Union Catalog*, pre-1956 imprints (NUC).

g) Any other work known and available to the cataloguer.

If the author's name cannot be found in any source, the name authority is established in the form as found in the book. If no author name can be assigned to a given work, or if a collection of works by several different authors is involved, the author's field is left blank, and the item is entered under its title (or its uniform title, see under II).

Since the John Carter Brown Library collects principally books published before ca. 1800, it is not unusual to find many standard reference works quite useless in establishing an author's name.

3) Results: The established name is entered on a Name Authority Sheet. All name variants found are also entered on this sheet.

[A catalogue card with the established name is typed and filed, in correct alphabetic order, in the JCB Name Authority file. Also, cross-reference cards, each containing one name variant observed, are typed and interfiled, in proper alphabetic position, in the JCB Name Authority file.]

All cards in the main JCB catalogue referring to an author whose name authority has been newly established have to be checked as to whether or not they are in accordance with the correct form of the name, and, if necessary, appropriate corrections have to be made. For books that were provisionally catalogued many years ago, such corrections are often required.

II. UNIFORM TITLE

1. Purpose: To bring together all the catalogue entries for a work when various manifestations (e.g., editions, translations) of it have appeared under various titles. They also provide identification for a work when the title by which it is known differs from the title proper of the item being catalogued.

2. Procedures: Check in the main JCB catalogue if a uniform title has been established.

   a) If yes, the uniform title as found is used on the worksheet.

   b) If no appropriate uniform title is found, one has to be established with the following *sequence of sources* to be consulted:

      i. Name Authority file in RLIN (for works with established name authority).

      ii. *The National Union Catalog,* pre-1956 imprints (NUC) and catalogs of some important large libraries, such as the British Museum in London, or union catalogs, such as the *Gesamtkatolog Preussischer Bibliotheken* (GPB), etc.

      iii. Bibliographical works.

If no appropriate uniform title can be found in any source, the cataloguer has to establish one.

3. Results: The established uniform title is entered, following the author's name (except for anonymous works) on a Name Authority Sheet, together with a cross-reference from the title proper of the item being catalogued.

[A catalogue card referring from the title proper to the uniform title is typed and filed in the main JCB catalogue, in proper alphabetic position.]

Items III-VIII below are covered by standards 1 and 4 referred to above.

III. **TITLE AND STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Consists of: Title proper, including alternative and parallel title(s) (= title(s) in other languages); other title information; statement(s) of responsibility. Required is a full transcription of the title page. If the title is printed in a non-Roman alphabet, it has to be transliterated in Roman, using transliteration guidelines established by LC and ALA (American Library Association).

IV. **EDITION**

Consists of: Edition statement; statement of responsibility relating to edition; subsequent edition statement; statement of responsibility relating to a subsequent edition statement. Information to be taken from title page, other preliminaries and colophon (= printer's and/or publisher's statement, usually at end of text).

V. **PUBLICATION, DISTRIBUTION, ETC.** ("Imprint line")

Consists of: Place(s) of publication; publisher's statement (which may include the name(s) of publisher(s), distributor(s), bookseller(s), and the printer); date(s) of publication. This information is gathered from the title page, other preliminaries, and colophon.

VI. **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

Consists of: Indication of paging or foliation, including leaves or pages of plates; illustrations, including special types, such as maps, portraits, tables, music, etc.; size (height of book) in cm., and format (correct bibliographical format). If the work consists of more than one volume, separate accounts of paging, etc., are to be given for each volume. The information is to be taken from the work itself, but comparison with accounts published in existing bibliographical sources is essential, in order to assess the completeness of the item at hand and to distinguish variants.

VII. SERIES

Series are rarely encountered in rare book cataloguing, but if it is indicated that a work is part of a series, it has to be reported, the information to be taken from the whole publication. Also, a check in the JCB Series Authority file has to be made if a name for the series has already been established. If so, the name as established will be entered on the worksheet, as well as the series name as found in the book, if it should differ.
If no card is found, the series has to be established and a Series Name Authority worksheet to be filled out, with the synonym added, if applicable. [A catalogue card with the established series name is typed and filed in the Series Authority file, in proper alphabetic position. Also, a cross-reference card, with the synonym referred to the established series name, is typed and interfiled in proper alphabetic position.]

VIII. NOTES

This is by far the most time consuming area in the cataloguing process. However, the actual number of notes may vary quite considerably from item to item. Notes, by their very nature, cannot be enumerated exhaustively. While some of them can be categorized in terms of the areas of description (see above under nos. III-VII), others defy such attempts. Nevertheless, commonly encountered notes refer to:

a) Source of authorship, if not given on title page.

b) Nature, scope, or artistic form of work.

c) Language of publication, translation, or adaptation.

d) Bibliographic history, including the indication of variants.

e) Editor(s) and translator(s).

f) Added title pages and title variants.

g) Title vignettes and illustrated title pages.

h) Colophon (unless information is given in publication, distribution, etc. area, see above no. V)

i) Information on date(s).

j) Collation by signatures, including the indication of blank pages or leaves. (This is the only type of note that will always have to be entered.)

k) Errors in paging or foliation.

l) Numbering of leaves of plates.

m) Bibliographical references. Up to 3 sources will regularly be cited (more will be listed only if needed as proof of information quoted); additional references may be listed on second page of worksheet. (The note on references will be omitted only in the rare case that a work cannot be found in any printed reference source available.) For abbreviated citations the following work has to be consulted: *Standard Citation Forms for Published Bibliographies and Catalogs Used in Rare Book Cataloguing*, prepared by Peter Van Wingen and Steven Paul David, Library of Congress (Washington, 1982).

n) Presence of Errata.

o) Presence of a bibliography (or bibliographical footnotes or references) and/or index(es).

p) Presence of bookdealers' advertisements.

q) Contents.

r) Specific contents referring to the Americas or to institutions or persons of importance to the Americas (a requirement based on the nature of the JCB collection).

s) Copy specific information, including statement on original binding, completeness or varying degrees of imperfection or presence of special features, contemporary manuscript notes, hand-colored illustrations, and if bound together with one or more other works. If more than one copy of the same work is owned by JCB, copy specific notes for each copy may be required, if any of the conditions just mentioned apply. Also, a second copy specific note is required to indicate how (e.g., by purchase, gift, or exchange) and from which source the copy was acquired.

IX. SUBJECT ADDED ENTRIES

1. Purpose: To provide additional information on persons or corporate bodies treated in the work.

2. Procedures: Exactly the same as those stated above under I. Author.

X. SUBJECT HEADINGS (covered by standards 2 and 4)

1. Purpose: To provide additional entries for the work, based on its contents; these access points are of high importance for scholars at the JCB and users in general.

2. Procedures: Check JCB Subject Authority file, if heading (and sub-heading, if applicable) has been established.

   If the heading is present and the source for it indicated on the catalogue card is an edition of LCSH other than the tenth, the heading has to be verified in LCSH, tenth ed.

If the heading is present and the source for it indicated on the catalogue is LCSH tenth edition, the subject heading as found on the card will be used.

If no card for the heading is found, a copy of LCSH, tenth ed. has to be searched and an appropriate heading will have to be selected and established.

3. Results: Each newly established subject heading is entered on a Subject Authority worksheet. Synonyms of subject headings (either listed by LCSH or found in other book catalogues) are also added on this sheet.

   [A catalogue card with the established subject heading is typed and filed, in proper alphabetic position, in the Subject Authority file. Also cross-reference cards, with the synonym referred to the established heading, are typed and interfiled in proper alphabetic position.]

   Exception: Headings on catalogue cards which have "JCB practice" indicated as source have to be used exactly in that form as stated, even if they should contradict headings found in LCSH, tenth ed.

XI. **YEAR DATE(S)** (entry for JCB chronological catalogue)

1. Purpose: To provide an additional entry for the work based on its date of publication; very important for scholars studying particular historical periods.

2. Procedures: The four digits of the year of publication are entered; in cases where a work was published over a period of two or more years, both the earliest and the latest year dates are entered.

XII. **ADDED ENTRIES**

Added **name** entries.

1. Purpose: To provide additional information for persons or corporate bodies connected with the work (co-authors, editors, translators, other authors and title(s) of their publication(s) that may be included in the item to be catalogued, etc.).

2. Procedures: Exactly the same as those stated above under I. Author.

Added **title** entries.

1. Purpose: To help the library user find a work of which he or she only knows the title, but not the author;
   To provide a means of finding a work under a title that may be familiar to the user or one cited in another publication, but which differs from the actual title, including alternative and parallel titles, cover titles, uniform titles, etc.

2. Procedures: As many forms of the title as are deemed necessary or useful are entered on the worksheet. If the first five words of a title include abbreviated words, a version with the abbreviation spelled out has to be entered also.

XIII. **COUNTRY AND PLACE OF PUBLICATION**

Required by standard 3, but not used in JCB practice.

XIV. **PROVENANCE**

1. Purpose: To identify the previous owner(s) of a copy, as a valuable tool in bibliographical, biographical, and historical research.

2. Procedures: Look for name(s) of person or institution which may be present in copy at hand, in the form of autographs, inscriptions by other persons, bookplates, binding stamps, even numbers or letters or combinations of both. In the case of bookplates and binding stamps, special works that identify the person or family may have to be consulted.
Even if no proof of ownership is found in the copy itself, acquisition records at the JCB may provide identification.
Also, in some cases, descriptions in bibliographical works may list former owner of copies.
If a former owner has been identified, the name (personal or corporate) has to be established in the same manner as described above under I. Author.

XV. **ILLUSTRATOR**

1. Purpose: In the case of illustrated title pages or title page vignettes, to provide information about the artist and/or craftsman involved; of high interest to patrons studying art history.

2. Procedures: Look for signatures of illustrator(s) on title page or for information given elsewhere in the work. If only initials are provided, identification may be difficult or impossible, although sometimes such information may be revealed in Thieme-Becker and Vollmer (reference works about artists).
If illustrator has been identified, the name has to be established in the same manner as described above under I. Author.

XVI. **COUNTRY AND PLACE OF PUBLICATION, DATE** (entry for JCB imprint file)

1. Purpose: To collect information about all the works published and printed at a certain locality and a given time; important for scholars studying the history of printing, among other things.

2. Procedures: For each place name reported in the "Publication, distribution, etc." area (see above no. V) and for each additional place name given in the colophon (and reported in the Note area, see above no. VIII), an entry is prepared consisting of:

   a) Country of publication (generally as of the time of publication; in the case of constituent states of Italy and Germany, these latter larger entities are to be used)

   b) City of publication

The names of country and city of publication are stated in English, as listed in the Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer of the World (New York, 1952). Modern equivalents for Latin place names may be found in the Supplement to Brunet's Manuel du libraire et de l'amateur des livres, published under the title Dictionnaire de géographie ancienne et moderne (Paris, 1870).

c) Year. If more than one year date is involved, separate entries for the earliest and latest year dates are to be made.

XVII. **CONTROL FIELDS** (covered by standard 3)

The following areas, if applicable, have to be filled in on the worksheet:

1. Library of Congress Card Number (LCCN), to be checked in NUC. A photocopy of each relevant book entry has to be made, to provide a permanent record for the JCB bibliographic file.
   If the particular book has been catalogued by LC, the LCCN is given, and that number is entered on the worksheet; if it has not been catalogued by LC, the area is left blank.

2. Symbols for reporting and cataloguing library (in our case: RPJCB).

3. Indication that work is or includes a translation; symbols for language(s) of translation and for original language and/or that of an intermediate translation; also symbols for language if text includes more than one language.

4. Geographical area code(s).

5. Presence of a copy at LC and statement of LC classification number. To be checked in NUC.

XVII. **FIXED FIELDS** (covered by standard 3)

The following areas have to be filled in on worksheet in code form (entries marked x only if applicable):

a) [Record identifier. Consists of library identifier code (in our case RIBR), the last two digits of the year and material type (B for books), followed by a consecutively assigned number.]

b) Record type.

c) Record status code.

d) Cataloguing category.

e) Bibliographic level and type.

f) Descriptive cataloguing form.

g) Cataloguing source code.

h) Country of publication (present day indication).

i) Language code, i.e., language or principal language of text.

j) Fiction indicator.

k) Type of date code.

l) Date(s).

m) Conference publication indicator.

n) Festschrift indicator.

xo) Illustration code.

p) Main entry in body of entry indicator.

q) Index indicator.

XIX. **HOLDINGS SCREEN** (covered by standard 3)

1. Purpose: To provide guidance for the production of catalog cards, depending on the needs and requirements of each library, in our case JCB.

2. Procedure: The following areas have to be filled in (often in code form, but for some areas in full):

   a) Cataloguer's initials.

   b) [Operator's initials].

   c) Output transaction instruction.

   d) Permanent shelving location (our code: JCB).

   e) Location level call number.

      The JCB has developed its own system, determined by nationality of author and last three digits of date of work, first letter of author's name or (in anonymous works) initial letter of first word of title (excluding initial articles), a number taken from the Cutter table and initial letter of the first word of the title (again excluding initial articles, also excluding author's name) or (in anonymous works) the initial letter of the second word of the title.

      If more than one book with the same initial letter of the first word of the title has been published in the same year, additional letters and/or numbers may be necessary. Also, oversize books are indicated by appropriate symbols, and the same holds for broadsheets.

Each book has to be checked for existing call number which is marked on the inside rear board or cover or on the last page of the text in pencil. If the number should turn out to be incorrect, the appropriate correction has to be made. If a book is without a call number, the cataloguer has to assign a correct call number and mark the book at the appropriate position. [A call flag including the complete call number is typed and inserted into each book at the top to enable quick retrieval from the stacks].

f) Location level additional note.

Several different kinds of information are provided in this area:

- The application of certain stamps to catalogue cards, with the goal of eliminating the production of cards with identical subject heading and/or added name entries when two or more editions of the same work are catalogued.

- Information about provenance (form of name and type of record involved).

- Information about defective bindings and repairs required.

- Indication that the Book should be included in the JCB's published series European Americana (for volumes of EA still to be published) or (for volumes of EA already published) that it has been omitted and perhaps should be included in a supplement or future edition.

g) Local level instruction

h) Location level extra card request (for binding repair file and European Americana).

i) Location level footnote.

Reports acquisition number.

Each book has to be checked for an existing acquisition number, which is usually marked, in pencil, on the last page of the text. If several works are bound together in one volume, each work has to have a separate acquisition number. The same holds for multivolume works. If no acquisition number is found in the volume or in the JCB bibliographical file or other records, a new number has to be assigned, the number being determined from the appropriate volume of accession books kept in the JCB reference room. The new accession number, together with author, title, place, and date, is entered into the accession book, and the number is also marked in the book itself. It is the one permanent number associated with a book. (The call number, see above under e, may be changed, if the need arises).

j) Location level pathfinder.

k) Location level field suppression.

Always an indication is necessary to suppress area XIII, "Country and place of publication," for card catalogue output at JCB (replaced by area XVI, imprint). Other fields may also have to be suppressed.

l) Copy information.

Important when library has more than one copy of a work; separate information for each copy is necessary, with steps XIX d-n to be repeated each time.

m) Shelf list note.

Reports acquisition number and acquisition date. Date of acquisition may be determined from inscription in book, information in JCB acquisition books, JCB bibliographical files, and printed JCB catalogues or annual reports. In some cases, only approximate dates can be established, due to the lack of pertinent information.

n) Date book has been catalogued.

o) [Date item has been entered in RLIN].

XX. PROOFREADING OF RLIN ENTRY PRINTOUT OF ITEM CATALOGUED

Accuracy is very important, since each error will be transferred to all the catalogue cards of the item produced.

END RESULTS

For each book catalogued, there will be multiple entries in the form of one to several catalogue cards each, in the various catalogues kept at the JCB.

For each author, and for each subject and name added entry, there will be a record in the main JCB card catalogue, arranged in alphabetical order. In this same catalogue, there will be separate records of the title and title added entries as well as of the subject headings.

Other records of the book catalogued will be found in the following separate catalogue files kept at JCB:

Chronological file, arranged by date of publication

Imprint file, arranged by country and city of publication and within each city in chronological order

Provenance file, arranged in alphabetical order

Illustrator file, also arranged in alphabetical order

Rare book shelf list, arranged by call number

Finally, the worksheet, together with the RLIN printout record and photocopy of

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the NUC entry, is kept in a folder in the JCB Bibliographical file, arranged according to accession numbers.

Each of the various catalogue entries, either alone or in combination, can now begin to serve its main function: to help in the retrieval of information. If the cataloguer has done her/his work conscientiously, the Library's users will reap the benefits in having better and easier access to that extraordinary storehouse of knowledge, the collective holdings of the JCB.

REF
I-SIZE
Z695.14
B8